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## **BUSTED**

Daniel finds more than he ever expected while helping a photographer friend with a last minute calendar shoot. When he meets Jamie, every assumption he ever made about himself is busted!

Daniel's straight. His legion of ex-girlfriends would testify to the hunky personal trainer being fiercely hetero, so why does the idea of kissing Jamie feel so absolutely right?

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# Love's Landscapes

*An M/M Romance series*

## BUSTED

**By Sofia Grey**

### Introduction

The story you are about to read celebrates love, sex and romance between men. It is a product of the *Love's Landscapes* promotion sponsored by the *Goodreads M/M Romance Group* and is published as a gift to you.

### What Is Love's Landscapes?

The *Goodreads M/M Romance Group* invited members to choose a photo and pen a letter asking for a short M/M romance story inspired by the image; authors from the group were encouraged to select a letter and write an original tale. The result was an outpouring of creativity that shone a spotlight on the special bond between M/M romance writers and the people who love what these authors do.

A written description of the image that inspired this story is provided along with the original request letter. If you'd like to view the photo, please feel free to join the [Goodreads M/M Romance Group](#) and visit the discussion section: *Love's Landscapes*.

No matter if you are a long-time devotee to M/M Romance, just new to the genre or fall somewhere in between, you are in for a delicious treat.

### Words of Caution

This story may contain sexually explicit content and is **intended for adult readers**. It may contain content that is disagreeable or distressing to some readers. The *M/M Romance Group* strongly recommends that each reader review the General Information section before each story for story tags as well as for content warnings.

This story is a work of fiction. Names, characters, places and incidents are the products of the author's imagination or are used fictitiously. Any resemblance to actual events, locales, or persons, living or dead, is entirely coincidental.

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Cover Art by Sotia Lazu

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# BUSTED

By Sofia Grey

## Photo Description

A young man, naked from the waist up, is bound by handcuffs and chains. His face is hidden in shadow, but he looks relaxed and passive. Another man stands behind him, one hand on his chest, the other dipping into the waistband of his jeans. The lighting is harsh, against a dark background.

## Story Letter

*Dear Author,*

C'mon, he said.

Please? It's not as if it's hard work.

You know I'd always do it for you if you needed my help.

Please? I really need an assistant.

*So now here I am. Trussed up... on display. All those things I said I'd never do. Well, at least what I always told myself I would never do. I just liked looking at this kind of thing. I didn't really want to participate... Did I? Well if that's the case, why am I more turned on than I've ever been in my life? And why do I feel as if I've finally come home? Especially with the way that super-sexy guy is looking at me.*

*Sincerely,*

*Shaz*

## Story Info

**Genre:** contemporary

**Tags:** gay for you, athlete, tattoos, photographic model, light hearted, hint of kink, businessman, student

**Word Count:** 17,249

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Shaz – I loved the prompt and hope my story meets your approval!

And a huge heartfelt THANK YOU to the consistently wonderful Mods and behind-the-scenes-worker-bees that organised this event.

**BUSTED**  
**By Sofia Grey**



## Prologue

He Obi-Wan'd me. I couldn't refuse.

And that was why I now stood half-naked, with chains around my wrists, in a disused warehouse, while a pair of gay models were feeling me up. And somehow, even though I was completely straight, I sported the biggest hard-on I'd ever known.

\*\*\*\*

## Chapter 1

### *Five hours earlier*

I knew it was Saturday, and that meant I didn't have to scramble out of bed at the crack of dawn to make my gym class. Instead, since I had no lectures to attend, I could take my time in the shower, eat a leisurely breakfast and then stroll down to the gym for a good workout. I didn't have any clients on a Saturday, and my time was all my own. I loved Saturdays.

If everything went according to plan, I might get some groceries, bribe my housemate and best friend Nick to go out for the evening, and *then* persuade Amanda to come for dinner. Or Jenna. They both had merits.

I *shouldn't* have been woken while it was still dark. I tugged the duvet higher and tried to cling to my sleep, but it was no use.

"Come on, Dan. It's important."

I cracked one eye open and squinted at Nick. "It's Saturday."

"Yeah, and I've got the calendar shoot." Usually, when he talked about The Calendar Shoot, it was with excitement. After all, it was the biggest piece of work to tumble in his direction, and his fledgling photography business would suddenly be big news when it was printed. Now, though, he looked anxious. Stressed.

"Wassup?"

He sank onto my bed. Well, technically it was his spare bed, in his guest room, but he insisted it was mine for as long as I wanted. "Fuckin' rotavirus."

"Huh?" I lifted my head and, with a sigh, pushed myself into a sitting position. Scrubbing my hands across my face, I tried again. "What's wrong with your computer?"

The look he gave me was scathing. "Rota. Virus. Half my models have got the shits."

"Oh."

"I've only got the warehouse for today, and there's no chance of an extension 'cause they're demolishing it next week. The guy that was coming from the magazine to be my assistant is sick as well." He blew out a breath,

then tugged on his shaggy blond hair. "I need you, Dan. I *know* it's Saturday, but..." *Oh no, please don't say it.* "Obi-Wan Kenobi, you're my only hope." *Fuck.* He said it.

Since we'd first become friends in the schoolyard at the tender age of seven, Nick and I had only ever Obi-Wan'd in times of dire need. Emergencies. I could no more refuse him, than I could avoid going home for Christmas dinner. Non-negotiable.

My plans for a lazy day were being crumpled up and tossed into the waste paper bin. "What do you want me to do?"

Relief washed over his face. "Thanks, Dan, you're the best. I need you to be my assistant and—uh—do a little modelling. I'm juggling the others round, but I'm three short, and... you know." He shrugged.

I'd stepped in as a model for him lots of times before. It was the least I could do since he let me live rent free, while I studied at Uni. It was also good publicity for my part-time work as a gym instructor and personal trainer.

"Gimme time to shower. Do I shave, or do you want scruff?"

He was already on the way out of my room. "Scruff," he called over his shoulder. "And be quick. I'm leaving in ten minutes."

\*\*\*\*

## Chapter 2

Nick bumped the van over loose gravel and pulled to a halt outside the abandoned warehouse. It had been a busy part of town forty years ago, with a car manufacturing plant, a couple of smaller factories and a dozen of those hulking buildings. That was the only one left in the desolate wasteland that was once a thriving neighbourhood of Wellington.

“You sure this is the best place for the shoot?” The huge metal sliding doors were orange with rust, and in the weak pre-dawn light, I could safely say it was the ugliest building I’d ever seen.

“Yep. *Industrial* is exactly the feel I want, and this is perfect.”

We were the first to arrive, but as I hauled bags of cameras, lights and cables, a colourful station wagon parked next to Nick’s van, and then a shiny silver Audi pulled up behind. They looked startlingly out of place, as did the guys who climbed out of the first car.

I had plenty of gay friends. It was impossible to go to Uni these days and not have a diverse set of study partners, but these guys were... *Camp* was too soft a word. *Outrageous* might be closer. They tiptoed over the gravel with squeals of alarm, and tossed insults back and forth as they went. Five gay models, and I was about to join them. I sighed. This wasn’t the first time Nick had neglected to tell me about my fellow models, and would probably not be the last time I had my arse felt up by them.

I thought longingly of Amanda and her enormous tits, and Jenna with her dancer-worthy legs, and resigned myself to the day ahead. There were more bags of gear than usual—some of them decidedly heavy, even for me. I ended up dragging the last one across the grimy concrete floor once I got through the doors. It made a dull clinking noise when it moved, and I grunted as I shoved it into position underneath the window.

“What the fuck is in here?” I stood and swiped my arm over my forehead. “Feels like a dead body wrapped in chains.”

Nick glanced up from his clipboard. He stood in the open doorway with the Audi owner, a man I’d instantly nicknamed Suit-Guy. They pored over Nick’s plans while I did the lifting and shifting. Already, two of the models had managed to brush against me, one stroking my butt and the other touching my arm. It was going to be a long day.

“Yeah, gimme a minute, Dan.” He went back to his run sheet and tapped the clipboard with his pen, while he explained something to Suit-Guy. In complete contrast to the models in their flamboyant skin-tight leather pants and flimsy shirts, Suit-Guy looked glossy and well-groomed. He’d be representing the magazine, and therefore paying for this gig. I knew without asking that we had to treat him like God, and I instantly felt bad for interrupting Nick.

Curiosity raging, I bent over and unzipped the holdall. I’d no sooner got the zip moving, than I had that weird prickly neck feeling, as though someone was watching me. Probably one of the models ogling my ass again. I glanced over my shoulder and, instead, saw Suit-Guy staring at me. He averted his eyes, but I’d already seen him. He stood there, looking as out of place in his expensive suit as I would be if I crashed a boardroom meeting.

I looked back at the bag, tugged a piece of cloth out of the way and paused, the breath leaving my lungs in a shocked gasp. *Whoa*. I was right about the chains. And handcuffs. Leather bands, a coil of soft-looking rope and—sweet baby Jesus—that looked like a flogger.

A dark heat filled my gut, and I blinked and swallowed. What the fuck? Not. Into. That. Shit. All the same, I had to stick my hand inside the bag and feel the rope, silky to the touch. My fingers glided over the coils, and it felt nothing like I expected.

Unbidden, memories flashed through my head. A chick I’d been shagging had asked me to tie her up once, and I’d refused. I’m not into kink. She’d been persistent though, and had insisted we watch a DVD of a couple getting it on with what she called ‘light bondage’. Yeah, right. I dumped her and moved on, but weeks later another girl I was with had found the damned DVD and wanted to watch it.

She’d grinned at me, and twirled the plastic case in her fingers. “Want me to tie you up, Danny?” I’d sent her packing and moved on again. What was it with girls? Never satisfied with regular sex. They always wanted more.

Beneath the rope lay more coils, all in gentle pastel shades, all the same texture, and all inviting to the touch.

A hard pinch on my butt jerked me back to the warehouse, and I shot upright and zipped the bag again. “Play your cards right, and I’ll be the one to tie you up,” the tallest and most effeminate of the models cooed into my ear. “I’m good with my hands.”

“I don’t think so.” I smiled to take the sting out of my words and turned to look at Nick, hoping he might sense my Come Rescue Me mental call. No such luck, but Suit-Guy was watching me again. As before, he rapidly shifted his gaze back to Nick’s clipboard. Everything about him, from the rigid set of his shoulders, to the masculine stance with his arms folded, semaphored his discomfort at being there. I knew how he felt.

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### Chapter 3

I'd been Nick's gofer enough times to have a broad idea what to do. Trying to ignore the bag of kinky shit, I turned to the stack of boxes and began to unpack the lights. I guessed the electricity had long since been cut off, and the only light we had so far was the morning sun creeping through the filthy windows. The models were huddled together over their own clipboard, and I was able to work unimpeded by them.

Nick had a complicated set of heavyweight car batteries and even a small portable generator for setups like this. Before I went much further, I needed to know how much light he wanted for the shoot. When I approached, he looked up and beckoned me over.

"Dan, this is Mr. McKenna, our client."

Suit-Guy held out a hand to me. "Please, call me Jamie."

My hands were grubby after hauling bags—and *touching the ropes*—and there was that awkward moment when I thought about first wiping my palm on my jeans.

Close up, Suit-Guy—Jamie—was taller than I'd thought, his shoulders broad inside the sharply cut jacket. His short dark hair was immaculate, and the crisp white shirt looked pristine beneath a pale grey tie, but his smile was friendly. Even his teeth were perfect, straight and white. Standing beside him in my faded jeans and a distinctly dusty black T-shirt, I wondered if he really wanted to shake my hand or was just being polite.

The moment dragged on, Jamie waiting while I dithered. Fuck it. I accepted his outstretched hand. His palm was cool and dry, his grip strong and confident. And that was when I noticed the cut on his chin. It was so tiny, I wouldn't have seen it if the sun wasn't on his face, but he must have nicked himself shaving this morning. For some reason, the fact that he wasn't perfect was a relief.

I looked further up and properly saw his eyes. What colour were they? Not quite blue nor green, they reminded me of a gemstone I had on my windowsill back at Nick's place. A girl had given it to me, her name long forgotten. It had a funny name, something like Labrador? I was racking my brains when I realised I was still holding his hand.

Okay, this was awkward. I freed myself and tried to remember what I wanted to ask Nick. Oh yeah, the lighting. I didn't get a chance to speak.

“Mr. McKenna is from the Piermont Group.” Who? I’d never heard of them, but Nick seemed to think it was important to mention. “He’s keen to see how we work. Do you mind if he shadows you while you set up the gear?”

Once again, I couldn’t very well say no.

I scrambled to get back on track. “Umm, do you want me to fire up the generator? What kind of lighting do you need?”

“Yeah, we need Jenny.” Nick examined his watch, stared into the recesses of the warehouse and then back at his clipboard. “First set against the wall with the pipes. I want it to look harsh and contrast-y, so we’ll start with the floods.”

He continued to issue instructions, while I dug into the boxes and found everything he needed. Minutes later, I crouched over the ancient generator that Nick had bought second-hand, and tried to coax it to life. This Jenny was a lot like my current hook-up, Jenna. They were both temperamental bitches.

Call-Me-Jamie hunkered down next to me and poked at a switch with his finger. “Looks like the plugs need changing.” His voice was as smooth and confident as the rest of him, and I agonized briefly about him getting an oil stain on his pinstripes. We had to look like a professional outfit, not some cowboys with third-rate kit. All the same, his knowledge might be useful.

“Jenny’s heading for the scrap heap,” I said. “But she’s all we’ve got for today. Do you know much about these?”

Bluey-green eyes twinkled back at me. “Not generators so much. But motorbikes, yeah. I usually have one in pieces on the kitchen floor. Current one’s a classic Ducati.”

I stared at him with new respect. “Bet your wife loves that.”

He shrugged and peered at Jenny. “Nah, I’m single. It’s easier.”

Yep, I was on board with that idea. “Cousin of mine used to be a biker. He had a Triumph Bonneville from the 70’s, and man, it flew along. I was gutted when he sold it and bought a Volvo instead.”

Jamie grinned at me. “Let me guess, he got married?”

“Yep.” I took a deep breath and pulled the starter again. Jenny coughed, spluttered and did nothing. “You lousy piece of crap,” I muttered under my breath. “Just work, damn you.”

“Hold on.” Jamie stood, shrugged off his suit jacket and, after a moment’s hesitation, laid it on Nick’s kinky-bag. Before I could stop him, he unfastened



silver cufflinks and dropped them into his pocket, and then rolled up his sleeves. With the jacket gone, a dark tribal tattoo on his upper arm was just visible through the fine cotton of his shirt.

Shit. It seemed wrong, getting the client to fix the gear, but it didn't take long. A few minutes later, he stood again, oil smeared across both hands. "Try it now."

He truly was a God. Jenny roared to life and sat there, purring like a kitten.

Jamie grinned at me, looking way more approachable than he had earlier. "Like I said, she needs her plugs changed, when you get a chance. Do that, and she'll keep running for ages."

"Thanks." I needed to get something to wipe his hands on. I dug into a nearby bag and came up with a towel and a packet of baby wipes. "Really, I appreciate your help."

"No worries. If you want the honest truth, I feel a bit out of place here. I'm covering for a colleague, and I'm more used to sitting behind a desk." He ran a hand through his hair, which immediately fell back into place. He was buff enough to be a model himself, but with a harder, more sophisticated edge. "Hey, if you want to see my Ducati sometime, flick me a text. I'm always happy to show off my bikes to an enthusiast."

Was he hitting on me? Nah. He wasn't gay. I'd stake my student loan on him being straight. We were just two guys discussing bikes and engines, and other manly stuff.

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## Chapter 4

For the next hour, Jamie helped me trail cables across the floor and drag tripods, lighting gantries and umbrellas into position. Nick had been horrified at first, but Jamie insisted he wanted to get involved, and I was glad of the help. I wouldn't let him do the dirty work, though. After all, I was in jeans and not a suit. He told me about the dog he'd adopted (some mutt that had taken up residence in his yard), his sister (married with two children) and the gym he used (on the opposite side of town to mine).

He laughed when I told him my confusion over the rotavirus outbreak, and how I'd instantly assumed Nick had been talking about software, since I was studying IT and programming. I talked about my plans for developing games, and he offered to beta test the one I was currently working on. Turned out he was a fan of first-person-shooter games too.

By the time we finished, Nick was ready to start.

Two models stood bare chested, leaning against a grimy section of wall, and Nick lined up the shot. "Okay, guys. Do your stuff." They began to kiss, while I adjusted the height of the spotlight and, on Nick's command, the intensity of the light. His camera clicked. Paused. Clicked again. The models continued to suck face, and I glanced across at Jamie to see how he was coping. He gazed at them, totally impassive, his arms folded across his chest again.

After every picture, Nick checked how the image looked on the monitor, before making a tiny adjustment and reshooting. The lighting was tricky, and it took a few minutes before we had it lit to his satisfaction. Even then, he still wasn't happy.

"Oil," he muttered. "We'll try oil." He meant baby oil, and I tossed the bottle to the models to apply for themselves. Jamie's eyes widened when they resumed their kiss, their arousal clear in the new bulges in their pants. Nick was pleased, and his camera fired off a long sequence of shots in succession.

The models were oblivious. They slipped and slithered their hands over their gleaming chests and bellies, before digging them into each other's hair. The kiss was slow, languorous and strangely hot. It was as though they'd forgotten they were standing in front of a camera—and an audience. I had to hold the spotlight in position, but I didn't want to watch them making out. It looked too real, too private. I fixed my gaze on the pipes above their heads, but I couldn't help it. I had to sneak another look.

It was odd to watch two guys making out. Although they took their time, they kissed hard, with a rough edge. Chicks always wanted soft and gentle, and I wondered for a fleeting moment how it'd feel with a partner who wasn't so fragile.

We worked through the next six scenes in a variety of poses, and then Nick beckoned me across. By this time, Jamie was getting involved in each shot, holding lights, handing over the oil, wet wipes and tissues, and generally getting his pristine hands dirty again. He took the opportunity of the break to make a phone call, and I went to see what Nick wanted.

My response was a solid *no*.

I'd agreed to model, but I hadn't agreed to being chained up. My throat tightened, and my heart thudded. *Restrained*. I wiped my suddenly sticky palms on my jeans. "No," I repeated.

"Aww, come on," he wheedled. "I wouldn't ask if it wasn't important. And you said you would..."

"I didn't say yes to *that*." My heart beat faster, the words sticking in my dry mouth.

"I'll keep your face out of the shot. It'll just be the neck down." He gave me a sad-eyed look. "Please."

Why was I getting so stressed? I tried to think clearly through the fog that filled my head. It was just a picture. Nothing more than I'd done lots of times before. *Chained*. Fuck. A flare of dark heat unfurled in my stomach.

The little devil sitting on my shoulder dug in his claws. *You might enjoy it*. No.

*Scared*, the devil taunted. No.

Nick waited, his fingers tapping against the tripod, his eyes worried.

"You keep my face out of the shot?"

"Yes."

"Fuck." I sucked in a rapid breath, my chest now tight at the idea. "Let's do it."

"You have to lose the shirt." Nick walked me to the position he'd marked then turned to dig into his kinky bag. I'd worked bare-chested for him many

times—hell, I was proud of my toned abs—but I'd never felt as exposed as I did now.

The rattle of chains made my spine prickle. I stared at Nick, his arms full of metal links, and I swallowed hard.

“Hold out your wrists,” he said.

I stood alone against a filthy wall, hints of age-old graffiti still remaining, with two of Nick's spotlights dazzling me. I blinked, squinting to see beyond him, but it was all a blur. The lights blasted out some serious heat too, and I felt a trickle of perspiration break out on my forehead. Mute, I lifted my hands.

The chains were cold. Heavy. *Menacing*. I gulped and tried to breathe through the clattering of my heart. Nick looped them over my wrists, around my back, up to my throat, and down again.

They made a bright chinking noise when I shifted position, and I moved again. They didn't sound scary, but the feel of them was... dangerous. *I'm helpless*. Liquid heat flickered through my veins, and I tried to suppress it. It was just the lighting.

“I need a few minutes to set this up,” announced Nick, and with one click, dimmed the spotlights to a dull glow. I blinked a couple of times as I adjusted to the light levels, and the first thing I saw was Jamie's face.

\*\*\*\*

## Chapter 5

Jamie stared at me, his expression unreadable. I felt like a bug under a giant microscope, but then he licked his lower lip, just a flash of movement, and I saw heat in his eyes. It was unmistakable. Before my confused brain could process his reaction, he glanced away, shuffled his feet and fiddled with his phone. The moment was gone.

Nick spoke to him, and Jamie moved to shift one of the lighting rigs, standing side on to me. He was silhouetted against a spotlight, and I idly stared at the contours of his body. I knew he worked out, and he looked very toned. Taller than me, he had more muscle and a sturdier build.

Another model stepped up next to me—the tall one who'd offered to tie me up. Great. I hoped Nick didn't expect us to snog. No, he wouldn't. If he was keeping my face out of the shot, there'd be no point in us kissing.

"Hello, handsome." The model, Glynn, placed his hands on my bare shoulders, and I jumped. "You're twitchy," he murmured, "but quite delicious. I'd love to corrupt you."

"Not a chance," I croaked.

His hands skimmed down my arms to rest lightly on top of the chains. They chinked with the movement, and he dug his fingers into the links. "I could tie you in knots, and you'd love every minute. Don't tell me you never imagined this. All bound up, with someone else calling the shots."

My heart juddered, and I fought to stop listening to him. It was no use. While Nick adjusted his camera and Jamie watched, Glynn whispered into my ear, "I can reach your nipples." His fingertip skated up my chest to draw a lazy circle around first one nipple and then the other. I couldn't help it; my breath released in a burst, and Glynn hummed his approval.

I wouldn't react to him, to *this*. I stared beyond the lights and found Jamie. Focus on him. Straight and as masculine as you could wish for. *Bet he'd look good in this picture*, the devil in my head whispered to me again. *Standing here with you, his hands on your skin.*

Jamie stood there, one hand fisted at his side, the other splayed on the light stand, his fingers sliding up and down in a tense, stiff movement. I'm not sure he even knew he was doing it.

*I wonder if he jerks off like that.*

Fuck. I had to stop thinking. I had to wait for Nick to set up the shot and then get the fuck back to the shadows. Another wave of perspiration broke out on my forehead, but now I couldn't lift my hands higher than my waist, so I couldn't wipe it away.

Jamie moved to the side, dug into a bag, and I realised Nick had asked him to pass across the baby oil. No, I wailed silently. I didn't want Glynn to rub oil into my chest.

*You'd let Jamie do it. The devil cackled. You'd let him slick you up with oil.*

I felt Glynn's hard-on nudging me and did my best to ignore it. Nick was invisible behind the lights, his camera clicking, and I found I was staring at Jamie again.

Glynn took his time sliding warm fingers over my skin, burning and teasing. Over my nipples, making my stomach clench at the intimate contact, down my abs and skirting across the waistband of my jeans. The molten heat in Jamie's eyes was unmistakable, and I held his gaze, silently daring him to look away first. It was as though I'd stepped into an alternate dimension, one where I stared at a man as if I wanted him. *I don't do this.*

When Glynn's fingers danced over my crotch—as if I'd need oil there—I sucked in a breath and tried to will my dick to stay still. It ignored me. What the hell was I thinking? And if I wasn't completely mistaken, Jamie was getting turned on too. He shifted his stance and gave a rapid tug at his trousers.

“I'd tie you to my bed,” whispered Glynn, hot breath flashing across my ear. “And then I'd lick every gorgeous inch of you.” More oil dribbled down my shoulder, and I bit my lip to hold back a groan. A mental image of Jamie, shirtless, burned onto my retinas. Jamie trickling oil onto my chest. “Have you ever had a man blow you before?”

I tried to say no, but my tongue had given up working. It felt thick and useless in my mouth.

“Girls don't do it properly. They're too soft.” Holy mother of God, I wanted him to shut up.

“Imagine the best blow job ever.”

I tried to summon a mental image of Jenna. No, she whined about taking me in her mouth. Said I was too big. *Amanda*. She was good on her knees.

“Now think about someone who *knows* what they’re doing. Taking your cock right to the back of their throat and then more. Stroking the sensitive skin under your balls at the same time.”

I couldn’t help it, I shivered at the idea. When I trembled, Jamie sank his straight white teeth into his bottom lip and tightened his hand around the rig.

*How would his mouth feel?*

“Okay, Dash, you join in now.” Nick’s words sank in as Dash, a tall Scandinavian model, stepped forward. He had no qualms about flattening his hands on my thighs, dangerously close to my crotch.

*What if they were Jamie’s hands?*

“Well, Glynn.” His deep voice rumbled through me. “Is he hot for you or for me?” He stroked one finger over my zipper, and I shuddered, my cock straining against his touch. I gazed helplessly, across the floor and found Jamie staring back at me, dark, intense and dangerous.

I’d never been so hard in my life.

I was so screwed.

\*\*\*\*

## Chapter 6

Time seemed to expand. It felt as though I stood there for hours, Glynn and Dash touching me, rubbing against me, whispering into my ears, and then kissing each other with me sandwiched between them. In reality, it was less than fifteen minutes of sweltering, dazzled under the spotlights. Every click of the shutter captured my exquisite agony in high resolution. I could hammer nails with my cock, and there was no way Nick could miss it through the lens. It throbbed painfully against my zipper, and I could do nothing but wait until the shots were finished.

As soon as it was over, I'd be dashing to the bathroom... if there was one. Christ. How long did it take before blue balls set in?

Every touch from Glynn and Dash, every breath and every whispered suggestion made me ache for Jamie. I had to be crazy.

*He wants you*, murmured the devil. *You can see it in his eyes*. It shouldn't matter. I didn't want him. I *couldn't*.

"Okay," called Nick. He flicked a switch and the lights dimmed. "That's great. We'll take five minutes and then move on to the next set." He appeared in front of me, a huge and happy smile on his face. "Thanks, Dan. I definitely owe you one."

It was over? Nick loosened the chains, and they fell away with a dull clatter. Glynn spoke to Dash, and they walked back to the other models, glugging on bottles of water as they went. I'd just had the single most erotic experience of my life, but nobody had noticed. I felt dazed, adrift on a sea of unfamiliar emotions. Where was Jamie? I rubbed my wrists and scanned the warehouse, looking for him.

There he was, near the doors, water bottle in hand. I had to speak to him. What would I say?

Uncertain, I scratched my neck and tugged my T-shirt back on. It stuck to the oil smeared over my torso and clung to my skin. Great. Now I was dusty and sticky, and still with a hard-on lodged in my pants. I dug up an awkward smile for Jamie. "Hey," I managed, and then dried up.

He nodded back, his face impassive. Had I imagined the molten heat in his eyes? And was I pleased that he'd been turned on by me, or scared? After all, I wasn't gay. The idea was absurd.



Jamie cleared his throat, then stuck his hands in his pockets. He wouldn't meet my eyes. Fuck, this was weird. We'd been chatting like mates an hour ago. He cleared his throat again. "That was, uh, hot." He hesitated, but then carried on. "I don't know if you're interested, but I've got a friend who, uh, makes films. He'd give you a screen test if you like. If I ask him." He glanced directly at me, then his gaze skittered away again.

*Films?* My brain processed the word slowly before it kicked me in the balls. Films that involved gay men getting naked. He was suggesting I took part in a *porno*? I took a step backward, and another. Christ, no. I didn't know whether to laugh at his offer or to punch him in the face. *I'm not gay.*

I settled for shaking my head. "No thanks." The words rushed out of me, but I couldn't say anything else. I wanted to stomp my foot and wail like a small child. *I thought you liked me.* I couldn't speak to him, didn't want to look at him. What the fuck had I really expected?

Shaking my head in disbelief, I stalked back to Nick. "What's next on the run list?"

For reasons I couldn't understand, I was angry. I shifted lights and umbrellas, swept sections of the floor and rummaged through Nick's bags for props, while silently seething. Jamie had excused himself, thanked Nick for the opportunity to watch the calendar shoot and left in his shiny Audi. He hadn't said anything more to me. We hadn't swapped phone numbers, so I guessed he no longer wanted to beta test my game or invite me to see his Ducati. Why did that piss me off? Fuck if I knew.

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Back home, hours later, I helped Nick unload the last of the bags and finally headed for the shower. The minute the hot water splashed onto my shoulders, I remembered Glynn trickling baby oil on them, and *that* made me think of Jamie. The look in his eyes. The way his hand clenched as he watched me. My stupid, confused cock reared up again.

I'd be seeing Amanda later. Jenna was busy, and since Nick had invited his girl to the house, I'd go back to Amanda's and get some action there. That was hours away though. I had plenty of time for a wank.

With my feet planted firmly on the tiled floor, I leaned against the wall with one hand and grasped myself with the other. I needed release, and fast. I squeezed hard and slid my wet hand up and down my shaft, rough and needy.

Glynn had been right; girls were too soft. They handled my dick like it would break at the slightest touch.

*Jamie would know what to do.*

Fu-uck. Just the thought of him had my heart pounding and the breath catching in my lungs. I pictured his hand on my cock, and my knees went weak. He'd be firm, on the edge of rough, just how I liked it. I yanked harder, feeling the burn, revelling in the tingling down my spine. My balls ached, and I pulled harder. That was better. My lungs were tight, heart banging against my ribs, and when I closed my eyes, it was Jamie's face I saw.

I came over my hand in a sticky mess and stood there, legs trembling and pulse racing. Amanda. Think of Amanda. "I'm not gay," I whispered to myself.

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## Chapter 7

Amanda draped her arms around my neck, and we swayed to the slow bass beat reverberating around the club. She wiggled closer and brushed her tits against my chest, smiling at me as she did so. Normally, my dick would be half-hard at the prospect of getting into her pants, but tonight... it lay sad and soft. Uninterested.

Maybe I was tired. I'd hauled lots of kit for Nick today. Maybe I was getting bored with her. When she disappeared to the bathroom for yet another eternity, I chugged my beer and let my gaze roam around the dance floor. Lots of girls showing lots of flesh. This was where I'd picked up Amanda in the first place. None of them appealed tonight.

I was tired but edgy too. It was an unsettling combination, and when Amanda suggested we go back to her place, I leapt at the offer. She was all over me in the cab, telling me in that breathy voice of hers that we'd been dating for weeks. Shit. I hated it when chicks got clingy, and it was enough of an excuse to let her down gently. When we reached her apartment, I gave her a quick peck on the lips and murmured some excuse or other before climbing back into the cab.

What was wrong with me? She'd been a sure fire thing tonight. Right now, I could be shagging her, but I sped through the darkened city instead. I leaned forward and snagged the driver's attention. "I've changed my mind. Can you take me back to the club please?" I needed a new distraction; that was all.

It was a couple of hours and several beers later, before I admitted the truth to myself. I was looking for Jamie on the dance floor.

I went home alone.

Lying in bed, failing to block out the noise from Nick banging his girl, I tried to get back to sleep, only to have blue-green eyes following me. My dreams were disjointed, but intense, and all featured Jamie. Christ, I couldn't get away from him.

When I staggered into the lounge in the morning, foul tempered and hung over, the first thing I saw was the gemstone on the windowsill. Labradorite—that's what it was called. It glittered in the sunlight, and I picked it up to look at it more closely. I'd been right. Jamie's eyes were the same colour. And why the fuck was that important?

I avoided Nick and his girl, didn't call Amanda back and decided not to answer Jenna's text. I had sessions booked at the gym today, both group classes and personal clients, and even though I felt anything but sociable, I had to be polite—if only for the sake of my student loan.

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Sunday didn't just drag; it was never-fuckin'-ending. In between classes, I ran myself to exhaustion on the treadmill and pumped free weights until my arms were shaking. While I still didn't feel in the mood for pleasant conversation, at least I'd worked off most of my foul mood. I was able to sit down with Nick and show interest in the initial cut of the previous day's pictures.

He flicked through them on his laptop, pointing out the highlights. I grunted where necessary, asked questions when he fell silent, and generally managed to limp through them all. The shots of me with Dash and Glynn didn't seem to be there, and my spirits rose. Maybe he wasn't using them.

Yeah, right. Nick beamed at me. "Guess which one I'm proposing as the cover shot."

*Fuck.* It was me. Gleaming under the lights, chained hands fisted, my face averted from the camera and just my chin on show. My hard-on wasn't visible, thank God, but from the way I leaned back against Glynn, his hands plastered across my chest, I appeared to be in ecstasy.

"You're kidding me."

"What do you mean?" Nick's surprise looked genuine. He gestured toward the screen with his thumb. "It's perfect. Easily the best picture from the day. The imagery. The background. The lighting. It's flawless, Dan. It might even be the best I've ever taken. You're going to be the cover model for the BUSTED Calendar." He gazed at it, a man besotted, and my heart sank. I'd never be able to escape it now. As if I needed any more reminders of Jamie.

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After another night spent tossing and turning, with sporadic dreams of the best blowjob ever, complete with blue-green eyes gazing at me, I was wrecked on Monday morning. It was back to my usual weekday routine, and I made the gym on time—*just*—and took my early bird wake-up class. This was filled with young, nubile office workers and plenty of clinging Lycra, but they did nothing for me. Not today.

Even with a healthy dose of porn the night before, the only idea that made me hard was the thought of Jamie touching me, and *that* was disturbing. I'd talk to Jezza, one of my gay friends, and see what he thought. He'd tell me it was just a reaction to the photo shoot, nothing to worry about.

The class finished on time, I hurried through my shower and had fifteen minutes to spare in my race to get to my first tutorial of the day. Jamie had mentioned his gym, in the opposite direction to Uni but within walking distance, and I knew there was a great coffee shop on that street. Yep, I used good coffee as an excuse to walk past his gym, on the slimmest of chances he might be coming out at the same time.

I'd already figured it out. I had to see him, see if he had the same effect on me now, as he did in the warehouse. If I bumped into him and felt nothing, I could laugh off my unsettling feelings and resume my life as normal. I refused to contemplate the alternative, that I'd see him and want more. That wasn't going to happen. And besides, he'd offered me a role in a porn flick. That still pissed me off. He'd written me off as gay, and obviously couldn't handle it.

*What if I am?*

I slowed my pace to a dawdle and tossed the idea around in my head. I still liked girls, so maybe I was just bi-curious. I'd never been attracted to guys before—or one man in particular. A guy who couldn't wait to get away from me.

Queuing for coffee, I took a position where I could see the entrance of the gym and watch the clients come and go. I tried a little experiment. Did anyone make me hot?

None of them. Not the girls in short skirts or the guys with tight butts. None of them had the same precision-cut hair, the eyes that haunted me.

If I lurked any longer, I'd be late. I headed for Uni, swigging my coffee as I went.

Jamie hadn't been there, and I couldn't decide if I was relieved or disappointed.

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## Chapter 8

I detoured past Jamie's gym again on the way to take my evening group classes. This time it was raining, and the coffee bar was shut, so I ducked inside. As luck had it, I recognised the chick on reception.

"Hey, Shaz, how are you?"

She smiled to see me and smoothed back her glossy ponytail, sweeping away a few blonde strands from her forehead. "Hey, Dan. Did you hear we're looking for an extra instructor? Are you interested?"

I didn't know about it, but I wasn't sure I'd apply. Tempting though it was to think of working in Jamie's gym, to maybe even work out with him, he'd not be impressed. He might think I was a stalker.

"Naw." I gave her a lazy smile. "Just checking out the competition."

"Pfft." She perched on the edge of the desk and sat there, legs crossed, toes twitching to the low beats pumping through the gym. "Stealing one of my best clients. I'm not impressed."

Huh? I had a new client yesterday, but she'd just moved to Wellington, so it wasn't her. "Who are you talking about?"

Shaz rolled her eyes. "You act so innocent."

I shrugged.

"Jamie McKenna—as if you didn't know."

For a second I couldn't breathe. "What?"

"He was asking if I knew you. If you were any good as a trainer." Holy. Fuck. My brain spun in circles, and I almost missed her next words. "I told him you were pretty, but clueless." She grinned and tapped me on the chest. "Really. What do you have that I don't?"

A cock. Obviously.

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I ran to my own gym, breathless with excitement. *Jamie had been asking about me.*

Maybe he wanted to talk about the porno again. I slowed my pace. Ah, that wouldn't be good. Modelling was one thing, but a film? Nu-huh. I wouldn't even consider that for Nick, no matter how much he pleaded.

I'd been so wrapped up in my fevered imaginings, I hadn't noticed how hard it was raining until I charged into the gym and collided with another trainer, Louis. "Jeez, Dan. You're soaked." He made a big show of shaking off the water droplets. "Better dry off quick. You've got potential new clients waiting in the office."

For one giddy moment, I thought he meant Jamie. But 'clients', *plural*, most likely meant another couple of chicks for my early-bird group. I sucked in an unsteady breath, snagged a hand towel from the pile beside the counter and mopped my face, before blotting my hair and taking off my jacket. Focus, Dan. More clients meant a quicker route to clearing my student loan.

I craned my neck to look past Louis, and saw a glimpse of bright blonde hair in the office. Yeah, more early-birds. Getting rid of the towel bought me another minute to tamp down my excitement over Jamie. I'd savour that later. With a confident smile firmly in place, I strode into the small office, ready to charm a couple of girls and sign them up for my group.

"Hi, I'm..." The words stuck in my throat. Sitting on the sofa was a tall, slim blonde, right next to Jamie. "Daniel Boisseau," I croaked.

Every part of me felt stuck in treacle. My lungs were tight and struggling for air, my feet were glued to the floor, and I think my mouth probably hung open for a moment.

The blonde flicked an amused glance at Jamie, then held out a hand to me. "Kate McKenna. Nice to meet you."

*Whaaat? McKenna?* Was she his sister? He'd said she was married, but she didn't wear a ring. I stood there like a prick, gawping at her, while I tried to pull myself together to shake her hand.

"Hi," I managed, my gaze veering straight to the man beside her.

"Hey, Dan." Jamie's voice reverberated through my nervous system and ignited a flaming ball of lust in my guts.

*Christ.* I hadn't imagined it. My dick twitched, and I sent it a severe *stay down* message. *Say something, Dan, don't just stand there.* "Hey, Jamie."

I knew I *should* be asking what they wanted, how I could help them, but I was useless. All I wanted to do was gaze at him and wonder for the millionth time if this searing attraction was as one-sided as I feared.

Luckily the blonde—Kate—seemed to have a better handle on things. "So," she drew out the syllable, and I dragged my attention back to her. I could feel

my cheeks burning under Jamie's gaze. "My cousin here is trying to persuade me to join a gym. What classes do you have here?"

*Cousin?* I glanced at Jamie again, another wave of giddy excitement washing over me. He stared back, a hint of a smile on his face. "We, uh, do group classes, and smaller private ones," I said. I had to stop, to wipe droplets of rain from my forehead. "What are you looking for?"

"Spin, pump, aerobics, maybe some Zumba. I like the idea of kickboxing too."

"Uh huh." Was it hot in here? More water threatened to drip from my hair, and I swiped it away.

"Mixed martial arts, track circuits, and body slam. How about yoga?"

"Uh huh," I repeated. She could have been reciting knitting patterns, for all the attention I was paying.

"Personal safety, bloodletting, and baying to the full moon?"

Now I looked more closely, her eyes were similar to Jamie's, only darker. "Uh—what?"

A mischievous smile played on her face. "I was starting to think you weren't listening."

Shit, I was screwing this up big time. Whatever my feelings for him, she was a potential client. "I'm sorry, I was—uh—distracted."

"Yes, I could see that. I'm serious about joining, you know."

I scrubbed both hands over my face, dug deep, and tried hard to focus on her. "I apologise. Tell me again what you're looking for. Maybe we should do the guided tour first, and then you can make up your mind." I snuck a quick glance at my watch and groaned silently. "Look, I'm giving a class in a couple of minutes. Let me get my colleague to give you the tour, and he can walk you through the timetable."

"Oh." Her face fell. "Okay."

I could see Louis tapping his watch and pointing to the room I was due in, and I still needed to get changed.

*Please don't go.* I couldn't ask them to wait for an hour.

"Can you come back tomorrow?" In my head, I called up my schedule. "I'm here in the evening."



A stream of clients made their way across reception from the changing room. *My class*. Louis gesticulated some more, and I knew I had to go. "I'm sorry, I have to get ready and then get to this class. So tomorrow? I'm here all evening." Would Jamie come back with her? Was he just satisfying his curiosity about me? And did I leave him wanting more?

"Okay." She nodded. "I'll come back tomorrow."

Bitter disappointment soured my mouth, and I had to fight to keep a neutral expression. I snuck another look at Jamie, but he was gazing into the depths of the gym, a blank look on his face. *Bored*. Well, that told me everything I needed to know. With one final awkward smile at Kate, I shot out of the office to the staff changing area, and then hurried to my class.

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## Chapter 9

I pushed myself hard in the spin class, pedalling like a maniac on my static cycle, to the bemusement of my clients. I'd fucked up tonight. I needed to make every muscle ache, to leave myself so exhausted that I might get some sleep. I had a test at Uni in the morning, and I needed to be fresh. Hah. Fat chance of that. I already knew I'd spend another sleepless night moping over Jamie. And just when did I turn into such a whining bastard?

My legs ached, and perspiration oozed out of every pore, as I staggered into the staff changing room and dropped onto a wooden bench. I sank my head in my hands. What a God-awful fuck up. It might have been my one chance with Jamie, and I'd behaved like a witless moron.

The door made a quiet snick, and my heart sank even further. An audience. Just to put the icing on the crap-cake of my day. With a weary sigh, I lifted my head.

Jamie stood there.

He leaned against the wall, hands shoved in the pockets of his jeans and a wary look on his face. Hope flooded my chest, and I looked him up and down, scared for a second that I was hallucinating. Dark jeans. Grey zipper hoodie. Baseball boots.

Casual gear suited him every bit as much as the pinstripes had. As I stared, he shoved a hand through his immaculate hair and messed it up a little.

Silence hung between us, although he must have been able to hear my heart pounding. It echoed in my temples, loud enough to hurt. I shook my head, but the vision didn't disappear.

"What are you doing in here?" My voice came out as a squeak.

His lips tilted in a wry half smile. "Kate wanted to join a gym."

"Why this one? Why not yours?"

He scratched at the light stubble that covered his chin. "Yeah, no." White teeth caught his lower lip. "You want me to be honest?"

My lungs were squeezed so tight, a nod was all I could manage.

Jamie sighed, stared at the floor, then he looked directly at me. "I can't stop thinking about you." His cheeks darkened, but he didn't look away. "I know

I'm not what you'd be interested in. I'm not into kink, not even a little. But... yeah." He blew out a harsh breath and then gave a short laugh. "It seemed like fate when Kate asked me to recommend somewhere." He gave an awkward shrug. "There aren't many Daniel Boisseaus in town. Not working as personal trainers. You weren't hard to find."

"Wait." I held up my hand. "Just rewind a minute." I replayed his words in my head. They made no sense. "You're *gay*?"

Horror filled his beautiful eyes, and he tensed. "Shit, yeah. I thought you knew." He scrubbed his face with rough, jerky movements. "Fuck. I didn't mean to offend." His smile was uncertain. "Look, I'll go. And—uh—yeah. I'm sorry." He turned on his heel, shoulders hunched.

"No." I had to stop him before he disappeared. "I don't understand what you mean. What you thought." I was babbling and I tried to speak clearly. "What did you think about me?"

Jamie didn't move. "I couldn't miss how turned on you were." His voice was low and husky. It soothed my clattering heart and vibrated through me, more sensuous than any girl's. "You were so clearly into the bondage and submission, and I just don't do that. And I thought... if that's what you need, I could try it. For you." He sighed. "But, yeah, I read that all wrong, didn't I?"

*I was turned on by you.* Time seemed to stop again. I stood at a crossroads, where I could either stick to what I knew or take this terrifying leap into the unknown. If this had been a cartoon, there would have been a signpost over my head or maybe a giant flashing light. *This Way*, it would urge.

*Jump*, urged the devil on my shoulder. *Say something.*

"No," I whispered. "I don't do that."

Jamie's shoulders slumped even further, and he took a step toward the door.

"I mean the kinky shit," I said.

He paused.

Fuck, this was difficult. I sucked in as deep a breath as my parched lungs could manage. "*I've never done this before.*" I tried again. "I've never done this before, but I think I want to." This was the point of no return. I clenched my fists on my knees. "With you."

I thought Jamie would never turn around. I sat on the bench, in an agony of uncertainty, dripping with perspiration and probably stinking to high heaven. *Please say something.*

Aeons later, he blew out a noisy breath and looked over his shoulder at me. “Am I about to corrupt a het?” His lips quirked into a crooked smile, and my heart nearly leaped out of my chest.

“I guess so.” I stood and smiled in return, and felt my lungs easing, the fear being nudged aside by anticipation. “Can we talk about this?”

“Christ, yes.” He walked toward me and stood there, a devilish grin on his face, eyes twinkling and a tiny dimple flashing in his cheek. “Did you think I was about to tackle you to the floor?”

Part of me felt relieved. “I need a shower before I do anything.”

Jamie's eyes burned with the same molten heat as I'd seen in the warehouse, and I swallowed hard when he stepped even closer. He stuck his hands back in his pockets. “Fuck, Dan, you look good enough to eat. I daren't touch you. I wouldn't be able to stop.”

I stared back at him, a thousand questions swimming in my head. There was so much I wanted to know, and I didn't know where to start. “Do you want to go for a drink? When I've showered. You could, um, wait for me.”

“If I stay here, I might embarrass myself, knowing you're in the shower.” He palmed his crotch, and I tracked the movement to see the outline of his very hard cock pushing against the denim. Instead of being nervous, like I'd imagined, I felt my dick rear up.

I nodded, speechless at the torrent of lust pulsing through me. Another long moment passed with us gazing at each other.

Jamie blinked and stepped back. “I'll wait. Outside.”

The devil in me piped up, and this time I gave him voice. “I should tell you, it wasn't the bondage that turned me on in the warehouse. It was you.”

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## Chapter 10

Jamie opened his eyes wide at my confession and groaned softly. “You seriously expect me to walk away from you now, after saying that?” He covered the short distance between us and stood in front of me, his breathing ragged. “You are so fucking hot, and you don’t even realise it.” I gazed back, excitement bubbling in my veins. I was going to kiss him. Kiss a man. Kiss *Jamie*.

“Just one taste, Dan.” His gaze searched my face. “And then I promise I’ll wait for you outside.”

He was the same height as me. It would feel odd, not leaning down for a kiss, and close up, he smelled good. Really good. Woody and outdoorsy, he reminded me of a summer garden after the rain. I inhaled and held the fragrance in my lungs. I could no more back away from this man than I could fly to the moon, but it felt right.

Amazingly so.

Should I touch him? Was he waiting for me to make the first move? He moistened his lips with the tip of his tongue, his breath unsteady, and it hit me. Jamie was nervous too. I had no idea if he was wildly experienced, but he seemed to be as affected by me as I was by him. It gave me courage.

I closed the gap and placed one hand over his chest. His breath hitched, and I felt his heart thudding underneath my palm.

He stood completely still, hands clenched at his sides. “Touch me,” he whispered. I complied. I lifted my other hand and, tentative, placed them both on his firm chest. He was hard planes and muscles instead of soft curves. Dark heat filled my guts.

“You look different without your suit.” I fingered the zipper of his hoodie. “Can I?”

“You can do whatever you like.” His voice came out strangled. I nodded and jerked down the zip, uncovering a grey Nirvana T-shirt beneath. The cotton was soft to the touch and moulded to his chest, fitting him like a second skin. Warmth poured from his body, matching the blaze in his eyes. In contrast to his rapid breathing, I felt strangely calm. I’d thrown myself off the precipice and was now freefalling, with no idea of where I’d land.

I wanted to touch his skin. Leaving one hand over his heart, I lifted the other and cupped his cheek. He huffed out a breath, and I felt his chest judder, but his face drew my attention. His chin was prickly with stubble. *Exciting.*

When I gently dragged a fingernail over it, he groaned and closed his eyes. “You’re killing me, I have to tell you.”

Now or never. I leaned across the gap and brushed my lips over his. Jamie’s eyes opened instantly, fever bright. His mouth was soft, chin was rough. Completely different to kissing a chick. So many textures. I kissed again and turned up the heat, and Jamie responded.

“Fuck, Dan,” he whispered. “Don’t stop.”

I did what I’d been dreaming of. I pushed him against the wall of the changing room and pressed my lips against his, hard and needy. He moaned into my mouth, his tongue flicking against my teeth, and then he nipped my lower lip. It stung, but he licked it away, the soothing gesture making my knees weak. I had his T-shirt bunched in one hand while I dug the other into his perfect hair and mussed it.

Every part of me felt alive in a way I’d never known before. It wasn’t just that my dick was like granite; it was as though I’d shoved my fingers into an electrical socket. My skin tingled, my heart raced, and even my sense of smell was keener. All from one kiss—and what a hell of a kiss.

Before I registered what he was doing, Jamie spun me around so it was my back against the wall and him in charge. Warm hands cupped my face, his thumbs brushing my cheeks. “I’ve wanted to do this since I first met you.” He angled his head, slanted his mouth and pressed it against mine. Slow, firm and dominating. I wanted to melt into him, to capture the moment for posterity.

From the fuzzy and totally distracted back of my brain, a warning light flickered on and off. Something I had to remember. Jamie’s tongue dancing with mine drove everything else out of my head, and it was only when he lifted his head that my memory kicked into gear. We were in the changing rooms.

Reality slapped me in the face.

*Louis might come in at any moment.*

And while this might be the hottest kiss I’d ever had, I wasn’t sure I was ready to come out just yet. Not to my nosy colleague.

Jamie must have sensed my hesitation. He dug his fingers into my hair, pressed a sensuous, fleeting kiss on my lips, then stepped back and dropped his

hands. "This isn't the best place, huh?" His smile was sweet and rueful at the same time.

"I need to shower."

"I'll wait outside."

I'd only just stepped into the shower, when Louis came in, clattering the gear in his locker and being as noisy as usual. "Hey, Dan. Fancy a pint? The chicks from my yoga class are heading up to Macs Brewery." He stuck his head into my cubicle. "There's a set of twins. They're so bendy, they'll be awesome in the sack."

Another time I would have said yes.

"Nah, mate." *I've got a date with a guy.* I'm going for a drink with the guy I just kissed. *I'm quite possibly going to have wild gay monkey sex tonight.* I contemplated the replies and discarded them all. "I've got a test tomorrow morning. I'm going home to study."

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## Chapter 11

Jamie was waiting by the entrance when I emerged from the changing room, my backpack slung over one shoulder. My clients and other gym users were all coming and going too, and the reception area was busy. A couple of girls from my spin class surrounded me, their faces flushed and smiling. “Hey, Dan. Good class tonight.”

I nodded and smiled back and tried to push past without being rude. “Thanks. Same time next week?”

“Definitely,” they chorused. The taller of the two reached out and placed her hand on my sleeve. “We’re going up to the waterfront, maybe Foxglove. D’you fancy joining us?”

“Sorry, I’ve got plans.” Just thinking about what those plans might include set my heart racing, but I managed to sound regretful. Polite. I looked over their heads and caught Jamie’s gaze, steady and intense. Escaping the throng, I moved to his side, hoisted my pack higher onto my shoulder and gestured toward the exit. “Ready?”

Jamie quirked an eyebrow at me. “Is it always like this?”

“Nah.” We walked side by side to the doors, and it took a few steps before I could speak without sounding like a complete idiot. “So, uh, where are we going?” The rain had eased now. We could walk somewhere without getting drenched.

He shrugged, looking completely comfortable. “Where do you fancy? Macs Brewery is good, or we could go on the waterfront. Plenty of bars there.”

I hesitated. Not Macs, in case I bumped into Louis. “Yeah, waterfront’s good.” I’d been to bars and clubs with mates, too many times to mention, but this just felt weird. We weren’t going for a drink as two guys to eye up the chicks. We were going on a *date*. Would he want to hold my hand? Kiss me in public? I broke out in a cold sweat.

“So how are you finding Uni?”

I mentally thanked him for tossing me a safe conversational topic as we strolled along the still wet sidewalks. “It’s harder than I expected, going back as a mature student. I mean, I’m only twenty-five, but I’d got used to having a



full-time job, and now I'm juggling a student loan with part-time work. It's good though."

"So why did you do it?"

"Eh, I didn't want to be stuck shuffling paperwork forever. What do you do? Nick didn't say much."

"I shuffle paperwork, mostly." I glanced at him to see if I'd offended, but he looked unruffled. "I look after marketing and communications for the Piermont Group. They're into publishing, hence the calendar shoot, but they do other stuff as well. Some finance and media, and they're getting into the energy sector."

It all sounded light years away from my life. Mine revolved around sweating in a gym and pouring all my creative energy into programming. Add in side helpings of beer, pizza and chicks... Jamie didn't look much older than me, and yet his life was organized. Successful. I shifted my backpack and picked up my stride.

Now was the time to ask him about the porn flick. I needed to clear the air on that score before we went any further. "Do they make movies? You mentioned a porn film."

"I *what?*" He stopped walking, and I paused and looked back at him. He stood there, eyes wide and a smile breaking over his face. "Did you think I meant a *porn* role?"

My cheeks burned, and I was glad of the shadowy street lighting. "Well, yeah."

"God, no." He laughed aloud. "I'm surprised you didn't punch me in the face."

I felt my lips curving in an answering smile. "I nearly did."

"That's hilarious." He started walking again, and I matched his stride. "I've got a mate who makes regular films, with an indie studio. I know he's casting at the moment for a short flick, and so yeah, I was serious, if you're interested."

By this time, we'd reached the cluster of bars and cafés that sprawled across the waterfront area. I headed for one of my favourites, the Chicago Sports Bar, and Jamie followed my lead. Despite it being a wet Monday evening, it was busy, and I saw a few familiar faces. Foxglove and Macs were great pickup places, the girls flocked to them, but the Sports Bar was a guy-oriented drinking hole.

*It's not a gay bar*, mocked the devil, piping up again. *Are you trying to make him uncomfortable?* No. Of course not.

“My shout,” said Jamie, reaching into his back pocket. “They do Gold Medal on tap. You want one? And if you’re hungry, I could get some nachos.”

I was starving after my spin class. And I loved their nachos. “Works for me.” When the barman greeted Jamie by name and said he’d rush the food order through, I had to smile at my assumptions. It sounded as though he came here as often as me.

“Something funny?”

The tightness in my lungs eased a little. “Nah, it’s all good. At the risk of sounding like a corny pick-up, do you come here often?”

He shrugged easily. “We use the upstairs a lot for corporate events. I like the vibe in here.” He grinned at me, a mischievous look in his eyes. “And besides, they have some great arcade machines.” Oh yeah. I’d been dead wrong.

Over the next hour, while we laser-blasted aliens, gunned down zombies and wove our sports cars around a variety of F1 racing tracks, we did some classic male bonding. A love of sci-fi movies: *check*. Beer over wine: *check*. Bacon sandwiches on plain white bread: *check*. Fitness: *check*.

For the moment, the elephant in the room stayed out of sight, but I knew we’d have to talk soon.

If I didn’t know Jamie was gay I would never have guessed. The way we clicked over a giant dish of nachos pushed him firmly into the could-be-mates category, and I was more confused than ever.

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## Chapter 12

“I need to get home soon.” Jamie pushed away his empty tankard. “Monty’s been stuck inside all day, and I want to give him a walk.”

I nodded and glanced at my watch. A shade after nine. “Yeah, I’ve got a test tomorrow morning. I planned to get an early night.”

“So.” There was a pause, then Jamie met my eyes. “Do you want to talk first? You can ask me anything you like.”

For one bizarre moment, I’d actually forgotten why we’d gone out. I’d been too busy making friends with him. “Um, where do you live?” His brows furrowed, and I hastened to explain. “I’m off Tinakori Road, in Thorndon. We might be heading in the same direction.”

“Kelburn.” He only lived a few kilometres from me, but on the other side of town.

The bar was noisy and full. There’s no way I could talk about gay sex, when I might be overheard at any moment by someone I knew. “You walking home?” He nodded. “Let’s talk outside.”

It was drizzling when we left the bar, but it was mild. Without speaking, we set off in his direction. He stayed quiet, waiting for me, I guess. Jesus. Where did I start? “You, um, always been gay?”

“Yeah, I think so. My first time was with a boy from college, but after that I went with girls. They never did it for me, though. It felt like I was missing something.” He huffed out a breath. “My parents are old school, and my Dad can’t get his head around it, so I tried to be straight. But yeah, it wasn’t me. I’m discreet, and I don’t flaunt my boyfriends in their faces, but it’s awkward. They still ask me if I’m going to settle down and get married one day.”

Shit. That had never even crossed my mind. I had a mental vision of me coming out to Mum and Dad. How could I tell them? Was there ever a right time? And wasn’t I getting ahead of myself? One kiss didn’t make me gay. *Even though you want more?*

“You got a boyfriend at the moment?” My voice stumbled over the word *boyfriend*, and I mentally slapped myself. I sounded like a jerk.

“I’m hoping to have one soon.” Huh? I snuck a glance at him as we strolled along the quiet street. He shrugged when he met my gaze. “I like you, Dan. A lot. I’d love to corrupt you.” This was accompanied by a teasing grin.

Just like that, the tone of the evening changed. His words reverberated through me, and the memory of our kiss ignited the lust that had stayed quiet up to now. I wanted him. I just wasn't sure what to do about it. I felt as tongue-tied as the first time I ever asked a girl out.

"Have I scared you off?" Jamie's voice was serious. I stopped walking and leaned back against the nearest shop window. He turned to face me, hands in his pockets, stiff-shouldered as though bracing himself for a blow.

"No." I rolled the word on my tongue. "I'm just, uh..." I hesitated, trawling my head for the right words.

"Nervous?" His lips tilted with a hint of a smile.

I sucked in a quick breath. "Yeah." The smile grew, and his dimple flashed at me again. I flattened my hand over my rising dick. "And horny."

Jamie let out a juddering breath. "Come back to my place. I can take care of that for you." He nudged at a soggy bundle of leaves with his toe. "No strings. And if you decide it's not for you, no harm, no foul. I'll stay out of your way."

I swallowed hard, and pushed down on the ball of anxiety in my stomach. I liked Jamie. I *trusted* him. If I walked away now, I'd always question if I'd done the right thing.

The walk up the hill to Kelburn passed in a blur of wet streets and sporadic conversation. Every part of me was viscerally aware of the man by my side. The way his shoes splashed carelessly through the puddles. The arm that brushed against mine. His rumble of laughter when I made a joke. I thought of the tattoo I'd seen beneath his shirt. Did he have more ink? I had a colourful snake across my shoulders, which he had to have seen at the shoot.

I was breathless when we stopped outside a tall, thin house, but it was nothing to do with climbing up the hill. My brain had gone into overdrive, hurling all the questions at me that I'd failed to ask Jamie. Was it safe? Would it hurt? Would I suddenly start wearing rainbow T-shirts and growing a 70's-style moustache?

He opened a latched gate, closed it carefully behind me and dug into his pocket for keys so he could open the door. A blur of fur and paws skittered down a corridor and leapt up at him, ignoring me.

"Hey, Monty. Good boy." Jamie reached to the side and flicked a switch, and the corridor bloomed with soft lighting.

Monty was a mutt. Part Labrador, part German Shepherd, part something hairy, he had enormous ears over soulful eyes, and a thick bushy tail that beat against my legs. His cold, black nose searched my hands and sniffed my crotch before Jamie hauled him back.

“*Monty.*” He sounded scandalized but then blasted me with his sexy smile. “I wanted to do that.”

I laughed. It was hard to stay nervous with this bundle of energy pawing at me. I’d always wanted a dog, and he was cute. “Did you say he needed a walk?” I gestured to my damp fleece. “We may as well go now. We’re wet already.”

The look he gave me was scorching. *Oh yeah.* His low growl made my already hard dick even more like a cricket bat in my pants. “There’s something I need first.”

Dog leash?

Jamie curled his fingers in my jacket and tugged me into his body. *Oh.*

“This,” he whispered, and closed his mouth around mine. Heat, strength and passion roared into me, and I grabbed his shoulders before my knees gave way. Fuck, the man could kiss. Too soon, he lifted his head, gave me a wicked smile, and rubbed his thumb over my lips. “Thank you. For coming.”

Through the fog of lust, my smart-ass mouth triumphed. “I haven’t yet.”

“You will. I’ll make sure of that.”

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## Chapter 13

Fifteen minutes later, we were back at Jamie's house, and this time we made it into his huge kitchen, where he did indeed have a Ducati in pieces on the floor.

While Jamie gave the dog fresh water and biscuits, I crouched and examined the motorcycle laid out on a thick sheet of plastic. "This is a beauty. What are you doing with it?"

"Rebuilding the engine. I need another couple of weeks before it's done."

I trailed my fingers over a shiny section of chrome and then straightened up. "Then what?"

He shrugged. "Haven't decided yet." He leaned against the stove, arms folded, and eyes wary, but with a smile not far away. I liked making him smile. "So, Dan. You want the five-buck tour or the ten-cent option?"

My teasing, "Haven't decided yet," made him laugh, and his dimple flashed. He grabbed my hand and led me through an archway into a tidy lounge, where he released my hand again.

"Why don't we start here?" His low voice made me shiver, and his eyes darkened. "You know, I think the tours have finished for today." Without taking his gaze off me, he slid the fleece jacket from my shoulders and down my arms, before dropping it to the floor. His hard-on was visible inside his jeans, and I had to touch him. Needed the contact. When I pressed my palm over his zipper, his cock bucked, and he groaned, the noise igniting something deep inside my chest.

I wasn't scared any more. I knew he'd look after me. I took a slow, deep breath and then reached behind me and tugged my T-shirt over my head. "You now," I whispered, my voice deserting me. "I need to see you."

Jamie dumped his hoodie and then his Nirvana shirt, and I stared at his bare chest. More muscular than me, but perfectly sculpted, he should have been the one modelling for Nick. I ghosted my fingertips over the tattoo, a detailed series of curves and loops, and he groaned.

"Why d'you have a snake on your shoulders?" His voice was strained, but that might have been because I was running my fingers over his chest and circling his nipples. They were small, brown and firm, and from somewhere in the recesses of my brain, I knew I wanted to lick them.

“Huh?” I wanted to lick his ink too. Like me, he wasn't very hairy, and now I thought of licking, I let my fingers skate down his abs and to the start of his happy trail. Would I give him a blowjob tonight? How would that feel?

“The snake tattoo?” He swallowed hard, and I watched his Adam's apple bob, fascinated by his body.

I pressed my lips to his ink. “I was born in the year of the snake.” I licked his skin and felt him tremble. He tasted like he smelled: clean, woody and unbelievably good. “Were you born in the year of the tribal wars?”

“Smart ass,” he whispered. “And now it's my turn.” As long as *his turn* included getting naked, I was fine. I'd seen other cocks before, usually in the changing rooms, but I'd never burned to see one before. *This one*. To see if it was as hard as mine. To see the effect I had on him.

I nearly climbed out of my skin when he pressed hot lips to the base of my throat and dug his teeth into the sensitive nerves there. “Whoa,” I gasped for air, and he hummed approval, before kissing his way down my chest. My dick ached, and I knew I wanted his lips wrapped around it. Maybe he could read minds. He unfastened the button on my jeans and slid his fingers into the top of my boxers. Jesus H. Christ. If he touched me now, I'd come in my pants.

“Tell me if you want me to stop,” he whispered against my ear.

Stop? That was the last thing on my mind. I managed a grunting noise. It was my way of saying, *please God don't stop, don't stop*, and he understood. In a graceful move, he dropped to his knees in front of me and smiled, his blue-green eyes molten with desire.

There were no words in my head. I stared, mute with longing, and he slowly tugged down my zipper, and dragged my jeans down my legs. My cock made a nice tent inside my boxers, and he played first, teasing me, running one finger along the waistband. What to do with my hands? I cupped his head and ran my fingers through his hair. Damp from the rain, it was cool and soft. The opposite of his mouth.

Moist heat enclosed my cockhead, and I groaned, digging in my fingers, before relaxing them again. I couldn't get any air into my lungs until I remembered to breathe. Holy fuck. This was like no blowjob ever before. I don't even know what he was doing, but his mouth, his tongue, his fingers... oh God, I just bumped the back of his throat, and he still kept taking me in.

When he moaned, it vibrated through me, setting every nerve on fire and ratcheting the About-To-Come-Meter up to a strong DEFCON 3. I wasn't

going to last much longer. I'd never seen anything hotter. Jamie, half-naked and on his knees, one hand around my dick, the other—ahh, cupping my balls—and his nose pressed into my groin. How did he *do* that? Could I do that for him?

As I stared, my heart pounding and every drop of blood in my body racing to my cock, he shifted his hands. One still caressed my aching balls, but the other meandered across my butt to circle my asshole. Fear and anticipation rushed through me. Nobody had ever touched me there. I'd fucked a few girls in the ass, but my own hole was pure and virginal.

I whimpered when Jamie moved his head back and my cock slid from his lips. "Has anyone ever...?" He left the sentence unfinished, but I knew what he was asking.

"You're the first."

He blinked, flashed me the sexy smile that I already adored and slowly lifted his hand to his mouth to suck on his fingers. My stomach clenched at what he might do, and my heart sped up. Was he...? Fuck. *Yes*.

He stroked and teased, and when he finally pushed one finger inside me, it didn't hurt at all. I was so surprised, I forgot to be nervous and, before I knew it, I was impaled on two fingers while he sucked my cock deep into his mouth again.

DEFCON 3 leapt to DEFCON 1, a hair's breadth away from imminent detonation, and then Jamie touched something inside me, and I exploded. "*Oh my fucking God.*" There was a single moment of clarity, when I wondered if I could come in his mouth without him choking, and then my body took over. I came so hard, I'm surprised I had bones afterwards. If he hadn't been holding on to me, I'd have collapsed to the floor.

He kissed my lips, and I tasted myself on his tongue. I'd have done anything Jamie asked at that moment. Going to bed with him was the easiest decision I'd ever made.

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## Chapter 14

I awoke to an arm draped over my stomach and the novelty of a hard cock pressed against my butt. Not unpleasant. In fact, I mused, I could get used to this. The next thing I registered was a cold, wet nose bumping against my chin, and the muffled beeping of a phone. My phone.

Jamie's bedroom was still dark, but I had a moment of panic. Was I late for the gym? I thought hard. No, it was Tuesday, and I didn't have any clients this morning. I did have a test at Uni, but that wasn't until later. Much later. Ignoring the repeated beeps, I flicked on the bedside light and rolled over to gaze at Jamie. *My lover.*

His eyelashes were ridiculously long, and his face was thick with stubble. Like mine, probably. I scratched my chin. Yep. How would he feel to kiss now? Memories of the night before rolled through my head. We'd fucked several times. Sure, my ass was a little sore this morning, but nothing that would stop me taking him again. My dick was keen to party, and I rubbed my hard-on against Jamie's. Who'd have thought rubbing my cock against another one would be such a turn on?

We'd done that a lot. And kissed. I'd given him probably the sloppiest blowjob in history, but he'd claimed to love it. I just needed more practice, and this might be an ideal time. I closed my hand around his cock and waited for his eyes to flick open. Behind me, I heard the rattle of Monty's claws on the wooden floorboards and a soft whine. And another beep.

Hooded eyes regarded me, and the most delicious smile in the world made an appearance. "Morning," he muttered, his voice rough with sleep. "Is that your phone?"

"Yeah. It won't be important." It would be Jenna. Or Amanda. Or Nick. All of whom could wait. I leaned into him, about to kiss the fuck out of him, when his eyes opened wide and he pushed himself upright in bed.

"What day is it?" He fumbled on the bedside cabinet for something, picked up his watch and peered at it.

"Umm, Tuesday. I can stay a while if—"

"*Fuck.*" Jamie threw back the duvet and slammed his feet to the floor. "It's fucking Tuesday. I'm late. Un-fucking-believably late."

“Late for what?”

He was already in the en-suite bathroom, and I heard the shower begin. I scrambled out of bed and padded in his direction. He was gorgeous in the shower, water cascading over his muscles, and his face scrunched up and covered in soap bubbles. I leaned against the bathroom door and stroked my cock. “Late for what?” I repeated.

“I’m due on a seven a.m. flight to Auckland. I have a Board Meeting every Tuesday.” *Oh.* I glanced at my watch to find it was already six-fifteen.

“Will you make it?”

“If I hurry.” The water turned off, he grabbed a towel and began to rub himself haphazardly. He paused and focused on me. “I’m sorry, Dan. I’d love to stay and have a lazy breakfast, but there’s no time.”

Disappointment pooled in my gut, but I fixed a smile on my face. “No worries. Do you want me to feed Monty? Give him a walk?”

Towel abandoned on the rail, he brushed his teeth, the muscles in his back flexing when he leaned over the basin. “I couldn’t ask you to do that.” He spat, rinsed and spat again, then turned to face me. “But thanks anyway.” He stepped toward me, looped one arm around my neck and gave me a minty-fresh kiss. All too soon, he broke off. “If you could give him some dry mix and water, that would be awesome. Thanks, Dan.”

Was he brushing me off? No, he just had work to do.

Jamie stood in front of his closet, riffling through coat hangers. His boxers clung to his still damp ass, and I smiled at the memory of what we’d done the night before. I’d fucked his ass, and it’d been the best thing ever. “Can you let yourself out? The front door will lock by itself; you don’t need a key.”

“Uh, sure.” I felt decidedly underdressed. Jamie turned to me while buttoning up a pristine white shirt, a charcoal grey tie already looped around his neck.

“I feel bad about this.” He paused and held my gaze. “You push everything else out of my head, Daniel Boisseau.” He seemed about to say more, but then closed his mouth and continued dressing.

Two minutes later, the front door banged, and I heard the roar of an expensive car. His Audi. I watched from the bedroom window as he roared up the street.

I sank onto the bed and fondled Monty's ears. This morning wasn't what I'd expected. I'd just spent the most erotic, most sensual night of my life, and he'd barely acknowledged it. "Does he do this a lot?" I asked the dog. "Maybe he's not good with mornings." My phone beeped again, and I picked it up and read the text. It was from Nick.

*I guess you hooked up. Amanda was looking for you, but I told her you were busy. Good luck with the test. Let me know if we're celebrating or drowning our sorrows tonight.*

I thought I'd told Amanda we were over? I lay back on the rumpled bed, inhaled the musky smell of my sex marathon with Jamie, and realised a few unpleasant things: I didn't know when he would be back; I didn't know if he'd want to see me again tonight; he'd corrupted me, but hadn't made any promises about a replay; I didn't have his phone number, so I couldn't even text him.

How many times had I flown out of a girl's bedroom on some flimsy excuse or other? How many of them had been left puzzling over whether they'd see me again? Too many. And now I was in that same situation, it sucked big time.

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## Chapter 15

Nick and I finally caught up in the late afternoon lull after Uni, and before I hauled ass to the gym for my evening classes. He breezed in, dumped his messenger bag and sank into a seat at the kitchen table.

“Well? How was the test?”

“Yeah, it was fine.”

“A pass?”

I pretended to look shocked. “Do you seriously think I’d fail? No faith, dude.”

He laughed, we high-fived, and I dug into my bowl of cereal again. I liked eating cereal. It was quick, didn’t need cooking and was light enough on my stomach before I exercised. Having a mouth full of food also meant I didn’t have to make conversation.

He ignored that. “Who did you pull last night? Not that stuffy Jenna again. She’s way too high maintenance.”

After spending the entire day trying not to think about Jamie, I’d arrived at a few conclusions. It might’ve just been a one-off. He might be the only guy that cranked my motor, and thus—in a true Sherlock Holmes deduction—I might not even be gay. Bi-curious was a better label. I’d scratched that itch, and now I could move on. All of these meant I didn’t have to fess up to Nick, and so I just shrugged and carried on stuffing my face.

Nick tapped his forehead and sighed. “I nearly forgot. Jamie McKenna was asking about you today.”

I nearly choked on my crisped rice. Nick waited until I’d stopped spluttering before he continued. “He said he’d been talking to you about a film role, but didn’t have your number.”

My phone had been silent all day. He hadn’t rung or texted.

“Did you give it him? My number?”

“Naw. I wanted to check with you first. D’you think he’s talking about a skin flick?”

*Not any more.* “No, it’s for real. He’s got a mate that makes movies.”

“Oh, right.” There was a long pause while I waited for Nick to say something meaningful. “Would you want to do that? I heard he’s gay. It might be some arty boy-on-boy flick.” He grinned at me. “You’d never get it up for another bloke.”

It was the perfect opportunity to say something.

I kept quiet.

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Emerging from one of my classes, I saw a flash of bright blonde hair in reception and recognized Jamie’s cousin, Kate. She’d promised to come back for the tour this evening, but on her own, it seemed. There was no sign of Jamie. We shook hands, and then I led her into the weights room and started my spiel.

She waited until I stopped before she spoke. “What did you think of my cousin?”

*What?* I stared, my cheeks heating under her gaze. Did she want a rating? How many times he made me come? How the fuck was I supposed to answer?

She sighed and tried again. “He likes you.”

“He said that?”

“Well no, not in so many words. But he rang me today and insisted I come tonight.” Her smile was so similar to his, and I found myself looking at her cheeks to see they shared a dimple. “He wanted to ring you, but didn’t have your number.”

*Oh.* I scratched the back of my neck and tried not to blush. Impossible. “Did he, uh, say what he wanted?”

“Something about a film. And that he wouldn’t be able to tell you more until he’s back in town.”

My stomach plummeted to the floor. It was a struggle to keep a neutral expression on my face. “Do you know when that might be?”

“He had to go up to Auckland for a meeting, but the bad weather meant his flight home was cancelled. He’s hoping to come back tomorrow.”

*I might see him tomorrow.* Excitement unfurled in my belly. “Hang on, what about Monty?” I asked.

Kate gave me a smug smile. “You’ve met him, haven’t you? *Monty.*”

“I might have.”

Her smile widened. “Let’s cut to the chase. Here’s his phone number.” She handed across a glossy business card. “For God’s sake, please give him a call. And don’t worry about Monty, I’m looking after him.”

She made it sound easy. Standing in the spin room, which was guaranteed to stay empty for at least ten minutes, I entered Jamie’s number into my phone and then agonized about dialling.

I was behaving like a moron. He wanted to speak to me. I pressed Call.

It dropped straight to voicemail. “*Hi, this is Jamie McKenna. I can’t take your call right now, but leave me a message and I’ll get back to you.*”

Fuck. I hated voicemail. I disconnected and then felt like a dickhead. We’d spent a large part of the night before exploring each other’s bodies with our mouths and our hands. How hard was it to leave a simple message?

I ended up composing a text.

*Hi, this is Dan Boisseau. Kate gave me your number. See you when you get back to town. PS. Kate’s looking after Monty.*

I added a smiley face, re-read it six times at least, and then pressed Send.

I took my class and picked up my phone as soon as I could, but there was still nothing back from him. Maybe he was entertaining customers? Or maybe he didn’t want to speak to me after all.

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## Chapter 16

When my classes were done, I rang Nick and arranged to meet him in town. I had no lectures on a Wednesday morning, and only one personal client, so I could safely have a few drinks without fear of oversleeping. *Like Jamie did.* I shook my head to banish *that* thought and headed up to the Chicago Sports Bar, where Nick assured me he had a pint already waiting. Several pints in fact. We celebrated my good test result and were engrossed in a cut-throat game of Zombie Invasion, when my phone vibrated in my pocket.

I dug it out and answered without checking the caller ID.

“*Dan.*” Fuck me, it was Jamie.

I abandoned the weapons controller on the game console and stepped back from the machine, to Nick’s astonishment. We’d been playing a team game.

“What the fuck, Dan? I’m getting wasted here.”

I ignored him and pressed the phone to my ear. “Hi, yeah, it’s me.”

Hearing Jamie say my name made me mushy inside. He’d moaned, shouted and crooned it the night before, and now, like Pavlov’s dog, I reacted automatically. My dick was hard. I blew out a breath and wove through the crowd to find a quieter spot.

“Kate told you I was delayed in Auckland?”

“Yeah. Bummer.”

His soft laugh made my spine tingle. “You could say that. Hey, where are you? Sounds noisy.”

“Chicago Bar. And yeah, it’s busy tonight. There’s a boxing match on later.”

“Ah, right.” There was a pause. “Dan, I’m sorry I had to run out on you this morning. Last night was pretty special. I’d like to see you again.”

He would? My doubts from earlier were being edged to one side, a quiet optimism sliding into their place. “Yeah,” I said gruffly. “I’d like that too.”

Jamie made a frustrated noise. “I have to go. Catch you later.”

I stared at my phone. The call had ended. What had happened at his end to make him cut off so quickly? I shrugged to myself, tucked the phone into my

pocket and headed back to Nick. He'd abandoned the zombies and waited at the bar for me.

"Dude. We were doing so well."

"Sorry." I held up a hand to get the barman's attention, but he ignored me. "Wanna have another go at the zombies?"

Nick's attention was focused on the entrance. "Later. You'll never guess who just walked in."

I continued sending feeble Jedi Look-At-Me messages to the barman. "Who?"

"Jamie McKenna."

*What the fuck?* I spun around, and there he was, striding through the crowd toward me. Forgetting Nick, I grinned at Jamie. "I thought you were in Auckland."

His answering grin made me weak at the knees. "I drove to Hamilton and flew down from there. I'd just found a parking space when I was talking to you."

"Um, hello?" Nick broke into the conversation. "Do you want to join us for a pint, Mr. McKenna?"

Jamie looked at Nick and then back at me. "Actually, I'm going to head home. I've had a long day. I don't want to interrupt."

Nick looked baffled, and Jamie looked tired. *Exhausted*. Little lines cut into his brow, and there were shadows under his eyes. The drive to Hamilton would have taken a couple of hours, and then he'd have had to wait for another flight. All so he could get home tonight.

With a sharp awareness, I knew this was another precipice. I could say goodnight to Jamie and watch him walk out, or I could be honest with Nick, my bestie. I owed him that.

I sucked in a steadying breath and stepped forward to stand next to Jamie. "Do you want me to come?"

Heat flashed in his eyes, and I felt it like a tidal wave. "I'd love to make you come," he murmured in an undertone, and I snorted with laughter.

"I'm, uh, going home with Jamie. I'll see you tomorrow." I stared into Nick's eyes and saw them widen with understanding.



“Dude.” He wagged a finger from me to Jamie. “You and Mr. McKenna?”

“It’s Jamie.” I spoke for him. “And yeah. It’s kinda new.”

My best friend gazed back at me for an age, and then grinned and held up the remains of his beer. “You still owe me a pint. I’ll collect another night.” I should have known he wouldn’t judge me, but it made my heart sing to see his easy acceptance.

The evening felt good, and I knew the night would be even better.

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## Epilogue

Christmas Day was hot. The sun blazed down from an azure blue sky, and like most of the party, I tried to find a patch of shade in my parents' garden. Dad flipped steaks on the grill, Mum unloaded bowls of salad, and my job—as always—was to make sure everyone had drinks. This was the one time of year the Boisseau clan got together. My entire extended family was here, as always, but with a difference this time: Jamie stood by my side.

We'd gone to his family in the morning, and now he was here, with mine. Dad was still a little unsure how to refer to Jamie. He struggled with calling him my *boyfriend*, and so we settled on *partner*. They'd become friends though, ever since Jamie fixed Dad's ride-on lawnmower, his pride and joy. Mum had been brilliant. My three brothers had given up with their jokes and accepted that Jamie was a *Top Bloke*, while my little sister thought he was *just yummy*.

That could have been because she adored Monty, but I agreed with her.

Jamie *was* yummy. And he was all mine.

## The End

## Author Bio

*Romance author Sofia Grey spends her days managing projects in the corporate world and her nights hanging out with wolf shifters and alpha males. She devours pretty much anything in the fiction line, but she prefers her romances to be hot, and her heroes to have hidden depths. When writing, she enjoys peeling back the layers to expose her characters' flaws and always makes them work hard for their happy endings.*

Music is interwoven so tightly into my writing that I can't untangle the two. Either I'm listening to a playlist on my iPod, have music seeping from my laptop speakers, or there's a song playing in my head—sometimes on auto-repeat.

## Contact & Media Info

[Email](#) | [Website](#) | [Goodreads](#) | [Facebook](#) | [Pinterest](#) | [Twitter](#) | [Amazon](#) | [Tumblr](#)

Catch me blogging with Allyson Lindt at [www.GeminiGirls.com](http://www.GeminiGirls.com)